

field hearing 2 weeks ago for the Natural Resources Committee. We toured solar facilities in California. We were in Representative MARY BONO MACK's district and Representative JERRY LEWIS' district. We were on a Marine base at Twenty-Nine Palms with my committee cochairman, JIM COSTA, who is from California as well.

We got to tour their solar facilities. And they are about to put at a Marine base at Twenty-Nine Palms 240 acres of an abandoned lake bed—it is dry, there's absolutely nothing on it—in solar panels. And they will be able to do that in a way that improves the makeup, the mix of renewable and unrenewable resources on that base that will make it the leading base in the whole Marine system for renewables, because they have wind, solar, and some geothermal.

But they probably could not pull that off if they were not on a nearly 600,000-acre military base, because if you try to move that same facility onto public lands in the desert, you encounter environmental group resistance to having large solar and wind projects, industrial scale.

□ 2045

So there's nowhere to go without offending someone in this country. Oil and gas development offshore on the Outer Continental Shelf would be a magnificent resource for us, but there are environmental groups that have testified against that. Industrial-scale wind and solar on deserts in California, groups are testifying against that. Nuclear, groups are testifying against that. Any hydrocarbon, groups are testifying against that. Coal, there are groups saying there's no such thing as clean coal.

We have to meet our energy needs as human beings, and there are ways to do it by using all of the resources we've discussed in moderation. That is the Republican response to this issue. To do it cleaner, do it better, do it with all of the resources that we have at our disposal in America; disengage from our need for foreign oil, because that is a national security issue, and produce our own energy, our own security. Do it in a more environmentally sensitive manner, but don't diminish our standard of living at the time we do it because it falls more seriously on working-class Americans and poor Americans than it does on rich Americans when we do something like our national energy tax, which is proposed under the name of cap-and-tax.

Thank you very much for including me in your discussion this evening, and I yield back to the gentleman from Iowa.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentlelady from Wyoming.

It occurs to me that if this Congress is to have a nuclear carbon footprint—I remember the Speaker when she was, let me say, sworn into the third-highest constitutional office in the United States of America, third in line for the

presidency, she concluded that this Capitol Complex was going to be carbon neutral, which means greenhouse gas neutral, which means CO₂ gas neutral. And having a look at the generating equipment that produces the lights that illuminates us tonight, Mr. Speaker, it occurred to the gentlelady, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, that she would need to make a correction that would make it consistent with her left coast constituents. So it went on the Board of Trade and carbon credits were purchased at a cost to the American taxpayers of \$89,000 to buy these credits that were designed to pay people to change their behavior that was contributing to the greenhouse gas, CO₂, and the atmosphere over all of God's creation. That \$89,000 was invested in two areas. I checked this out, and I went to visit some of the sites. One of them was no-till farmers in South Dakota. They were no-till farmers before they got the check. They were no-till farmers after they got the check. If they actually tilled the ground afterwards, the carbon escaped anyway. So if they sell the farm, somebody comes in, puts a disk or a plow to it, it will go back into the atmosphere. So the sequestration was nillo, shall we say. That was the no-till farmers in South Dakota. There was also a nice check that was written to an electrical generating plant in Chillicothe, Iowa, that was to pay them to burn switchgrass in place of coal in order to make the CO₂ emissions carbon neutral as opposed to contributing to the CO₂ in the atmosphere, which would come from the net consumption of coal. Well, I don't know. This is a pretty interesting thing. So I went to Chillicothe, Iowa, and I visited the generating plant. I went into these buildings that were full of the switchgrass hay they had purchased several years earlier, at the cost to the Federal taxpayer and a government grant, the equipment to run these big round bails, 1,500-pound switchgrass bails, through a hammermill to chew them up into little itty-bitty pieces, to spit them into the incinerator and blend them with the coal dust that would come from the grinding of the coal that would allow it to combust at the most efficient rate. This switchgrass that was going to be carbon neutral had been burned to generate electricity a couple years earlier, but—here is something I know—when I'm looking at a shed full of switchgrass brown bails, and it's covered with coon manure—not cow flatulence but coon manure—they probably haven't burned much of that hay in a long time.

So the conclusion that one can draw was actually, 2 years earlier was when they shut down the switchgrass burning technique, but yet they were paid to burn the switchgrass and to do this carbon-neutral approach. So we have 89,000 taxpayer dollars invested in purchasing carbon credits to provide carbon-neutral emissions for the Capitol Complex, to buy these carbon credits

on the Board of Trade in Chicago, to encourage people to do more things that are more conducive to the environment and produce less CO₂ than they would have otherwise. I couldn't verify that anybody changed their behavior whatsoever for \$89,000. I can tell you, if somebody wrote me a check for \$89,000, I would at least consume less energy, let alone produce that energy in a more environmentally friendly fashion.

So that's the result of cap-and-trade that is being proposed by the Energy and Commerce Committee today and probably tomorrow and hopefully the next day and the next day and the next day ad infinitum until they decide that the science doesn't support this and the economics doesn't support it. But that comes to mind for me. And, by the way, the electricity that we consume in Iowa, a lot of it comes out of the Powder River Basin in Wyoming. I have been up there to look at that, where you could put a school bus in the bucket of the drag line. I'm still a little confused about square miles versus cubic miles of coal, but I know they have a lot of it in the Powder River Basin. I'm glad to have the power, and I appreciate the rail lines that come down. I really don't want captive shipping going on, but I appreciate the connection we have along with the renewable energy that comes out of the Missouri River and the seven dams that are on the Missouri River and the hydroelectric power that comes, which is carbon neutral, Madam Speaker. Our hydroelectric is carbon neutral but it does not get credit for being renewable energy because Bobby Kennedy Jr. and others think that however the rivers were is how they ought to be reverted back to and that we can't improve upon Mother Nature. I think God gave us these natural resources, and he's given us the ability to improve upon them. We've done so in many cases, and we should do so into the future.

I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from Texas, the Secretary of our conference, Judge CARTER, as much time as he may consume.

Mr. CARTER. I thank my friend from Iowa.

As I listened to that story about switchgrass and that we paid those people money, I don't have anything against them, but it sure sounds like the inmates are running the asylum around here. I mean, I think anybody that heard that story would think, Good Lord, those people are crazy. I really want to say again—and I've said this before—if you're trying to stop CO₂, and I'm throwing off a bunch of CO₂ in my company, and I can go out and buy some carbon credits from you who happens to be running a real good clean company, I still keep putting the stuff in the atmosphere, right? I haven't cleaned up my act. I mean, they put a cap on me. I'm not meeting the cap, and I just bought an excuse. Kind of like Al Gore with his 100,000-foot house—or whatever it is he's got,